

Rainbow Hydroelectric Facility,
Tool House
350 feet south-southwest of Powerhouse Addition
Great Falls Vicinity
Cascade County
Montana

HAER No. MT-95-F

HAER
MONT
7-GREFAV
2F-

PHOTOGRAPHS
HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD
Rocky Mountain Regional Office
National Park Service
P.O. Box 25287
Denver, Colorado 80225-0287

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

RAINBOW HYDROELECTRIC FACILITY,
TOOL HOUSE

HAER
MONT
7-GREFA
2F-

HAER No. MT-95-F

I. INTRODUCTION

Location: The tool house is located at the Rainbow Hydroelectric Facility, which contributes to the significance of the Great Falls Hydroelectric Facilities Historic District. The tool house is 350 feet south-southwest of the southeast corner of the Rainbow Powerhouse addition. The Rainbow Facility is located on the Missouri River, two miles northeast of Great Falls, Montana.

Quad: Northeast Great Falls, Mont.

UTM: Zone 12: 485320 Easting; 5264650 Northing

Date of Construction: c. 1908

Present Owner: The Montana Power Company
40 East Broadway
Butte, Montana 59701

Present Use: Storage

Significance: The Great Falls Hydroelectric Facilities Historic District is significant for its association with the industrial development of Montana and the consolidation of most of Montana's electric industry into The Montana Power Company. The district is also associated with John D. Ryan, the promoter of hydroelectric development at Great Falls. The buildings and structures are representative examples of design concepts of the period. The tool house contributes to the significance of the district.

Historian: Mary McCormick and Lon Johnson
Renewable Technologies, Inc.
Butte, Montana 59701
April 1995

II. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

The tool house is located within the 100 kV switchyard at the Rainbow Hydroelectric Facility (see figure 1). The date of construction and original function of the tool house are undocumented. The building appears on the 1921 "Insurance Map of Rainbow, Montana" in a location just to the northeast of its current site.¹ The move may have occurred at the time of construction of the 100 kV yard in 1929. A local resident reported that a visitor identified the building as the Rainbow schoolhouse.² No documentation to support this use was found in research conducted by the Cascade County Historical Society.³

The tool house is a rectangular, wood-frame building, measuring 26'-0" x 14'-0". It rests on a concrete foundation and has a concrete floor. The walls are sided with drop siding. The corner boards terminate at a wide fascia and rake board. The soffits are enclosed. The fascia has a cornice molding at the roof line. The gable roof is covered with wood shingles. A galvanized ridge roll with finials is located at the ridge. The building has a large six-over-six double-hung window in the middle of the northwest and southeast walls and two similar windows at the southwest gable end. A four-panel door is also located on the northwest side. The northeast gable end has a large pair of outward-swinging garage doors. These doors are constructed of drop siding and have surrounds and a mid-support of plain boards in different widths.

Endnotes

1. "Insurance Map of Rainbow, Montana," April 1921. MPC Drawing No. 9938-D, located at The Montana Power Company, Butte, Montana. The erased outline of the building is visible on the updated original tracing.

2. Rose Periman, Interview with Lon Johnson, April 4, 1995. Rose Periman, a current resident of the operators' camp, reported her source as Mrs. Bill Eminger from Butte.

3. Julianne Ruby (Cascade County Historical Society), Telephone conversation with Lon Johnson, April 24, 1995. A search of the Cascade County Historical Society's records did not uncover any information about a school at Rainbow. Likewise, School District No. 1 has no record of a "Rainbow School," however, the schools are indexed by name, so there remains the possibility a school may have existed under another name.

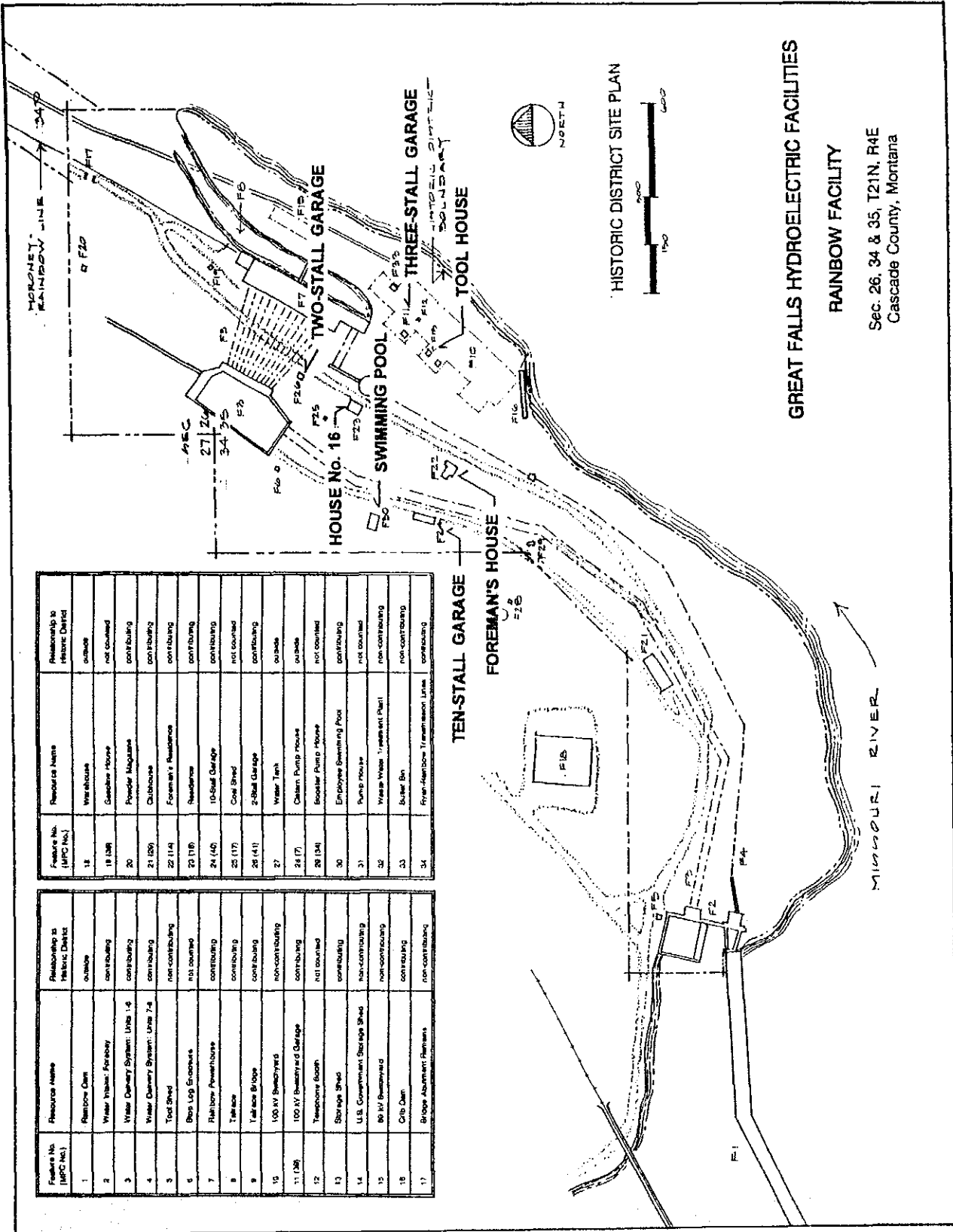


Figure 1. Rainbow Hydroelectric Facility Area Map.

III. FUTURE OF THE PROPERTY

The Montana Power Company plans to demolish the tool house at the Rainbow Hydroelectric Facility (FERC Project No. 2188). In accordance with the continuing management plans for historic Plant Operating Facilities, the Company is sponsoring Historic American Engineering Record (HAER) documentation of the building.

IV. BIBLIOGRAPHY

"Insurance Map of Rainbow, Montana," April 1921. MPC Drawing No. 9938-D, located at The Montana Power Company, Butte, Montana.

Periman, Rose. Interview with Lon Johnson, April 4, 1995.

Ruby, Julianne (Cascade County Historical Society). Telephone conversation with Lon Johnson, April 24, 1995.